United Nations S/PV.6909

Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

6909th meeting
Thursday, 24 January 2013, 10.25 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Masood Khan	(Pakistan)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Estreme
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
	China	Mr. Tian Lin
	France	Mr. Briens
	Guatemala	Mr. Briz Gutiérrez
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Kim Sook
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	Togo	Mr. Menan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Shearman
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in Burundi

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Burundi (S/2013/36)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Burundi

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Burundi (S/2013/36)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Burundi to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Security Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Alberto Shingiro, Permanent Secretary at the Ministery for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Burundi.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office in Burundi, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Paul Seger, Chairperson of the peacebuilding configuration for Burundi of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Switzerland, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Security Council to document S/2013/36, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Burundi.

I now give the floor to Mr. Onanga-Anyanga.

Mr. Onanga-Anyanga: I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on Burundi as it considers the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2013/36).

It gives me great pleasure and privilege to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of Janueary. Under your skilled leadership, the Council is in very good hands. As this is the first time that I am briefing the Council on Burundi, I would beg your indulgence in using the full time alloted to me.

As the Council knows, the Burundi has traveled a long path out of the cycle of violence that plagued it for more than four decades. The United Nations has been at Burundi's side every step of the way. The people and Government of Burundi have the greatest appreciation for that support. As I begin my presentation, allow me, Mr. President, to thank the Government and people of Burundi for the very high esteem in which they hold the United Nations. I have been humbled by the warm welcome I have received and the cordial relationships we have established since my arrival in their beautiful country. The work of the United Nations in Burundi is both respected and valued. It is in appreciation of the priceless support of the United Nations to their country that the Government of Burundi has made it a duty to reciprocate and give back to the community of nations, in particular by providing critical forces to peacekeeping operations, most notably in Somalia, and often at a high human cost. We will never be able to thank them enough for their sacrifice.

On behalf of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and all the members of the Security Council for your dedication in the search for lasting peace in our ever more global and complex world, most specifically in Burundi.

Throughout 2012, Burundi continued to make further progress in consolidating peace and stability. By comparison with the situation that prevailed during the years of war, today's Burundi is a far better place to be in and to live in. Historians and observers may tell members that never before has the country witnessed such a long and uninterrupted period of democratic experience and stability. The Government and people of Burundi need to be commended for that major achievement in a post-conflict context. They deserve our continued support. That is not to say that the country has overcome all of its challenges. I will discuss both achievements and challenges with the Council today, through the lens of the benchmarks that the Council asked the Secretary-General to submit to it, and measure Burundi's progress against.

A number of the positive trends reported by my predecessor, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Karin Landgren, to whom I am ever grateful, during the previous briefing on Burundi to the Council in July 2012 (see S/PV.6799) have been further consolidated. Determined to overcome the effects of the long-standing conflict, Burundi has continued to make progress on its path towards a more peaceful, more just

and more cohesive society. However, the impact of the boycott of the 2010 elections continues, unquestionably, to affect negatively Burundi's political landscape. The political standoff between the Government and the extra-parliamentary opposition has led to tense relationships — sometimes with a violent edge to them — thereby putting an unnecessary and regrettable strain on political space. Needless to say, that is contrary to the letter and spirit of the consensus that has animated the peace-consolidation process since the Arusha Accords. Burundi's long-term stability — and, more immediately, the successful preparations and conduct of the 2015 elections — hinge, critically, on maintaining both.

Burundi is to be commended for its efforts in strengthening governance and institution-building, leading to continued improvements in mechanisms to fight corruption and build accountability. Burundi's new Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) was finalized and adopted in January 2012, and the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework in January 2013. We congratulate Burundi for the clearly articulated vision and excellent road map that those documents provides us with.

The conference of Burundi's development partners that took place at the end of October in Geneva helped to mobilize major support for the implementation of the new PRSP, in an impressive show of confidence by Burundi's international partners. The many partners and friends of Burundi who attended the conference could see for themselves that Burundi had travelled a long path. Democratic elections were held twice since the end of the conflict. And the efforts that the Government has been making to strengthen good governance and the accountability of institutions are beginning to pay off. Burundi, on the other hand, restated in Geneva, and in subsequent statements by its highest authorities, its commitment to the principles of democracy, inclusion, human rights and reconciliation.

As I mentioned earlier, the report of the Secretary-General before the Council contains an evaluation of the progress made against each of the eight benchmarks. Allow me to briefly highlight key points from the assessment.

(*spoke in French*)

The democratic process in Burundi continues to take on strength, despite the fact that, as I said a few moments ago, the impact of the boycott of the 2010 elections is still being felt. The majority of the most important institutions continue to improve and to carry out their responsibilities with greater confidence and efficiency. We can be pleased that today that the opposition's rejection of the legitimacy of the institutions that emerged from the elections appears to be waning.

One of the negative aspects of the boycott was a decrease in the diversity and representative character of legislative bodies, thereby circumscribing the chances for genuine debate and the search for consensus in addressing major issues of national concern. As nature abhors a vacuum, we have also witnessed a shift from the opposition to civil society when it comes to the Government's actions, with civil society increasingly being on the frontlines in opposition.

In spite of that tension and the divergence of views on a great number of issues that are severely testing Burundi's experience of democracy, the discussion between the Government and the extra-parliamentary opposition is continuing. For example, we should welcome the fact that the controversy surrounding the appointment of the members of the new independent National Electoral Commission has been overcome. Everything must now be done to support the work of that important institution, so as to allow it to organize the 2015 elections in an atmosphere of calm.

Generally speaking, I would like to commend the receptiveness of Burundi's authorities and opposition leaders to our humble advice and suggestions to be more accommodating.

In spite of those political challenges, Burundi continues to enjoy an outstanding level of security and stability. That is undoubtedly due, in large part, to the successful reform of Burundi's army and its growing professionalization. Now that things are calmer within its borders, Burundi has become an important actor in international efforts at peace, including efforts led or supported by the United Nations. Working with international partners, the United Nations has continued to provide the necessary support to strengthen the professionalism and accountability of the security sector, including people's confidence in Burundi's security forces.

While the overall security situation has remained stable, cross-border incursions by armed group continued throughout 2012, leading to armed clashes with Burundi's security forces. Although most were

low-level clashes, those incidents nevertheless reveal that there are still Burundians who will turn to armed violence to achieve political goals. The Secretary-General unreservedly condemns all recourse to armed violence as a means or tool of political expression, and calls on all Burundian political forces to choose dialogue and turn to democratic institutions over violence. When it comes to cross-border movements of armed groups, it is crucial to foment greater stability in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. That is an essential element of a comprehensive strategy to build lasting peace in Burundi.

It is also essential to put an end once and for all to acts of intimidation and factional violence in the context of Burundi's political landscape. Burundi, which has suffered too much from exclusion and clan mentality, continues to show the world that it has the necessary maturity to overcome its differences through dialogue. That was the right choice in Arusha in 2000, and it continues to be the right choice today.

Achieving a process of transitional justice that meets the dual objectives of reconciliation and providing justice is indeed crucial, but as yet incomplete under the Arusha Accords. The Mechanisms of Transitional Justice is at the very heart of the absolute need to take responsibility for the past by each Burundian and by the country as a whole. In that regard, transitional justice is an essential element of national restoration and reconstruction. There is national consensus on putting in place the basics. The country's President has on many occasions underscored the willingness of the Government to set up a truth and reconciliation commission. A bill that has garnered the attention of the entire country is currently before the National Assembly for consideration. Throughout 2012, the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights stressed the need to address this issue in a manner consistent with international norms and best practices, as well as in line with national expectations. Accordingly, BNUB submitted its comments on the draft law to the President of the National Assembly. We are hopeful that, in its wisdom, that body will strike a constructive balance between the essential need to promote national reconciliation with the need to provide justice in order to put an end to impunity and overcome the deep divisions that have afflicted the people of Burundi for so long.

For the same reasons, all stakeholders should ensure that the truth and reconciliation commission to be established be viewed as independent, legitimate and credible in the eyes of all Burundians, first and foremost, but also in the eyes of the country's international partners. The United Nations has supported Burundi since the beginning of the process and remains prepared to support a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that is fully in line with international principles and common aspirations.

Significant progress has been achieved with respect to governance and the strengthening of institutions, allowing ongoing improvement in anti-corruption mechanisms and enhanced accountability for institutions. As proof of this, Burundi has been ranked highly in several global and regional ratings systems. The National Strategy on Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption has begun to yeild concrete results, and the positive performance of the Burundi Revenue Authority is clear to all. The commitment of the President to pursuing his zero-tolerance policy against corruption lends significant political credibility to such efforts.

There is no need to stress the essential role that the judicial system can play in helping to establish a Burundian society based on respect for the rule of law, peacebuilding and stability. It is therefore important to enhance it and to ensure that it is representative, while also shoring up the publics's trust in it. However, we must recognize that the judicial system also continues to encounter major challenges.

I will now turn to human rights. The human rights situation showed some encouraging signs of improvement in 2012 compared with the two previous years. For example, the number of extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and/or deaths that could be considered as politically motivated, as well as cases of torture documented by BNUB, decreased significantly compared with the previous year, although the number of instances of abuse continues to increase overall. BNUB and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have worked tirelessly to support the Government in ensuring national capacity-building in promoting and protecting human rights in Burundi. This has been accomplished, inter alia, through close cooperation with the Ministry of Human Rights and support to the Independent National Human Rights Commission that was set up in July 2011. The Commission has seen a significant

increase in the number of cases recorded, studied and completed this year. It has also opened three regional offices, which has expanded its scope and enhanced its efficiency.

Civil society organizations continued their outreach work on relevant issues, including human rights, corruption and social issues such as the increase in food prices. While it is clear that tensions continue to plague the work of such organizations, we must welcome the positive examples of cooperation between the Government and civil society. We must also stress that the existence of a dynamic civil society and independent media are valuable assets for Burundian society. We must do our utmost to ensure that those stakeholders continue to play their essential role of monitoring and outreach, ethically and in a responsible manner, in order to contribute to enhancing democracy gains and to achieving the national strategic development objectives.

The eighth criterion, which deals with economic and social development, is without doubt that to which the Government of Burundi is giving the highest priority, and rightly so. Burundi continues to face major challenges. Despite the incredible progress that has been achieved, Burundi remains one of the poorest countries in the world. For too long, the peace dividends that could have served as a solid basis for development have not met expectations. Now more than ever, the country needs the support of all its partners in order to win the fight against the extreme poverty that still affects the overwhelming majority of its people, despite their courage and industriousness. Joint efforts of the international community are therefore absolutely essential to help the country improve its productivity and promote economic growth towards shared prosperity.

In the short term, the country needs significant budgetary support to allow it to deal with the many challenges that are inherent to the functioning of a post-conflict society. The further commitment of the private sector through investment is also essential in potentially productive sectors such as energy, the food industry, infrastructure or mining resources.

I would like to express my sincere admiration and appreciation for Ambassador Paul Seger, as Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, for the truly decisive role he has played and continues to play in enhancing the international community's awareness of the absolute need to support Burundi's efforts to fight poverty and pursue growth. Once again, I reiterate that I am fully prepared to work with him in carrying out his noble mission. We are particularly grateful to the Peacebuilding Commission for its efforts to prepare and ensure the successful organization of the donors conference in Geneva and for its support to the peacebuilding process in Burundi, in particular through the Peacebuilding Fund, which has been so skilfully managed by my colleague, Under-Secretary-General Judy Cheng-Hopkins.

(*spoke in English*)

Lifting a country out of poverty and healing the wounds of long-term and cyclical violence are immense challenges. Overcoming them requires the contributions of all elements of society. I am confident that the Government of Burundi and its people know that an open, more democratic Burundi will be better prepared to respond to the major tasks it faces.

The United Nations has been Burundi's partner throughout the long and often arduous peacebuilding and peace consolidation processes. We remain at Burundi's side today. We believe that there is a true opportunity for Burundi to firmly establish an era of transformative politics through inclusion, dialogue and the search for the common good. To move forward, it is crucial, however, that we not lose sight of the objectives Burundi set for itself in Arusha and in its 2005 Constitution — building institutions that strive for good governance and equitable growth, while forming a society that respects diversity and human rights — in short, consolidating a vibrant democracy where all citizens can live in peace and freedom.

With the 2015 electoral campaign just two years away, it is now essential that both the Government and the opposition play their parts in ensuring a continuing consensual approach in dealing with the challenges ahead. That is why the Secretary-General has called on all to intensify their efforts to nurture dialogue and normalize relations and to ensure that the foundations for a peaceful and participatory campaign period are laid now. I am confident that, if the remaining challenges in Burundi's peace consolidation process are addressed in such an atmosphere of openness and mutual support, we will succeed, and that beautiful country will be able to ensure that those who are children now can exercise their right to a better future. It is our assessment that sustained United Nations and international political

engagement, combined with adequate backing of the country's development strategy, are still required to help achieve that vision.

The Secretary-General therefore recommends that the mandate of BNUB be extended for one year, consistent with the views of the Government as set out in a note verbale of 24 December 2012. In consultations with the highest authorities of Burundi, I have had the opportunity to review our collaboration and discuss the way forward, including with the Permanent Secretary, who is here with us today. Against this backdrop, the Secretary-General intends to field a strategic assessment mission, which will provide a further assessment of the situation through the existing framework of benchmarks, and will inform his recommendations regarding the future presence of the United Nations in Burundi. He will present the recommendations in his next report to the Council, taking into account the views and consultations with the Government of Burundi.

As I conclude my presentation, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all my colleagues, in particular Under-Secretary-General Feltman and his team in the Department of Political Affairs, and of course those in Burundi, both in BNUB and colleagues from the United Nations system, for their dedication and support in helping Burundi and its people. I would also be remiss not to thank the very dynamic diplomatic corps in Bujumbura for their invaluable support.

Allow me in closing to make one last comment on a rather personal note.

(*spoke in French*)

From the green hills of Ngozi in the north-east of Burundi to the banks of the life-giving waters of the majestic Lake Tanganyika, a powerful and united outcry is heard. It is that of the men and women of Burundi, appealing for the emergence of a more harmonious, just and peaceful society as the basis of a more prosperous and promising nation for present and future generations. These men and women, young and old, from all ethnic backgrounds and of all religious convictions, will not understand why their legitimate expectations should be disappointed. Together and in support of the Burundi Government's efforts, that hope can serve as powerful leverage to achieve the strategic objectives that Burundi has set for itself. I have no doubt that the Council has heard Burundi's outcry and that it will once again be able to respond favourably with all the strength of its authority.

The President: I thank Mr. Onanga-Anyanga for his comprehensive briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Seger.

Mr. Seger (*spoke in French*): In my capacity as Chair of the country-specific configuration on Burundi of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to address the Security Council. I should like to thanksto the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, for his briefing here today — which I fully endorse — and for his relentless efforts in assisting Burundi.

I shall structure my remarks around the three following points. First, I will briefly cover the main messages of the Conference for Burundi's Development Partners, held in Geneva on 29 and 30 October 2012, and its aftermath. Secondly, I will offer a briefing on my most recent trip to Bujumbura, which took place from 14 to 16 January, where I met a wide variety of stakeholders who gave me a general sense of the situation in the country, to see for myself how the follow-up process to the Geneva Conference is unfolding, and to discuss further PBC engagement with the relevant authorities. Thirdly, I will explain to the Security Council why a one-year extension of the political mandate of the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB), with the option of prolonging it beyond that, would be of great help to me in my task of supporting Burundi in my capacity as the country-specific configuration.

I will try to limit my remarks on the Geneva Conference to a minimum, which Council members will certainly remember as I have already described it in depth a letter sent 28 November 2012. Seeking to promote Burundi's second-generation Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP-II), the Geneva meeting in late October 2012 was a success. It also marked a critical phase in the strengthening and institutionalization, on the basis on the PRSP-II, of the partnership between the Government of Burundi and its international partners, traditional and new alike.

The reinvigorated partnership rests upon two assumptions. On the one hand, the international community, through its strong financial and political commitment, clearly acknowledged the far-reaching and impressive progress achieved by Burundi so far. On the other hand, the trust shown by the partners present in Geneva should encourage the Burundi Government to redouble its efforts to implement much-needed

reforms in the political, institutional and socioeconomic spheres. In that regard, during my meeting with Burundi President Nkunrunziza in Bujumbura last Wednesday, I was encouraged by the President's message that he regarded the commitments of Geneva as reciprocal. I recommended that he announce a number of concrete steps in the coming weeks and months to follow up on Burundi's engagements. At the same time, I have asked all donors to honour their pledges and to continue to follow Burundi in its reform efforts.

I visited Bujumbura last week, where I met with the main governmental representatives, including the President, representatives of all political parties, including the extra-parliamentary opposition. I also met with civil society members, the private sector, the President of the National Independent Electoral Commission, the President of the Independent National Human Rights Commission, the Burundi Revenue Authority and international partners.

The main purpose of my visit, as I mentioned, was to discuss the future steps of the Configuration's engagement with Burundi, including the follow-up process to the Geneva Conference. Building on the dynamics of the conference, I proposed to the governmental authorities that we continue with our political, institutional and socioeconomic engagement. The latter relates to the Geneva follow-up process. From my conversations with the representatives of Burundi, both in New York and Geneva, I gather that the Government wants the Burundi configuration of the PBC to maintain its commitment support until 2015 and beyond, which I consider to be very positive. I reiterate my willingness to continue advocating and counselling Burundi, and I will try my best to ensure that the pledges made in Geneva will be kept.

From my meetings with the relevant stakeholders, I learned that the Government, starting in April, intends to organize sectoral conferences on infrastructure, transportation and security, the development of the private sector, health care, good governance and the environment. While I welcome the Government's plans, I urged it to prepare the conferences with utmost care, even at the price of having to postpone them. Setting priorities, identifying one's target audience, and defining expectations and needs will be crucial aspects for the success of the conferences. The international community lend Burundi a strong helping hand in that regard. Geneva was but the first step; the challenges of implementing the PRSP-II have only just begun.

At the political and institutional level, I recommend concentrating the configuration's efforts on the areas in which we have already been cooperating with Burundi: dealing with the past; national reconciliation and transitional justice; widening the political space and the democratic culture, including political dialogue, the return of exiled opposition leaders and the 2015 elections; the rule of law, human rights and reform of the justice sector; and good governance, fighting corruption and promoting transparency. In all of those areas, the Peacebuilding Commission can constitute an important platform for dialogue and exchange and thereby support the efforts of other actors, such as BNUB and the United Nations Development Programme. The strengthening of important institutions, such as the Independent National Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Good Governance, which are doing terrific work, is also a crucial factor.

Further progress in those four areas is needed and indispensable. This year will prove decisive for the consolidation of peace in view of the 2015 elections. An open and inclusive atmosphere will be essential for the return of genuine multiparty democracy. The success of the electoral process depends on the opposition and the Government alike; all must contribute.

In Bujumbura I sensed a genuine interest from both sides in not repeating the errors of 2010. Government representatives emphasized that they want a real competition in 2015. The extra-parliamentary opposition is keen on participating, although they realize that at this stage, victory in 2015 amounts to wishful thinking, which therefore puts participation in the elections in a long-term perspective.

Those developments are very positive, but risks still exist. Maintaining and expanding the political dialogue between the Government and the extra-parliamentary opposition will be key in avoiding those risks.

Similarly, the process of dealing with the past is also critical. It is up to Burundi itself to decide on how the matter is to be approached; that is clear. Nevertheless, I urge the Government to be especially sensitive to the opinions of Burundian society on the issue.

I intend to communicate those priorities to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Laurent Kavakure, in a formal letter. If this procedure is agreeable to Burundi, my letter and his reply could henceforth form the basis of mutual commitments between the PBC configuration and Burundi. It could

replace our outcome document, which has now become obsolete because, as of June 2013, all the peacebuilding review processes will be incorporated in the monitoring and evaluation of the first pillar of the PRSP.

My visit last week also marked an important step in expanding the Peacebuilding Commission's partnership with other relevant actors, particularly with the international financial institutions. Building on the success of the Geneva conference, Mr. Philippe Dongier, Regional Director of the World Bank, and I met with high-ranking representatives of the Burundian Government together, including the President and the Second Vice-President. We explained to them that socioeconomic development was inseparably linked to political and institutional progress, which forms the basis of the Peacebuilding Commission's work.

In the future, we envisage a continuing increase in our partnerships. In that connection, I also travelled to Nairobi to meet with the Director of the World Bank's Global Center on Conflict, Security and Development, Mr. Joel Hellman.

Let me now turn to my third and last point. The effectiveness of my work as Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission is to a large extent based on the excellent role played by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his team. The collaboration with BNUB, for example, has been key for the success of the Geneva conference. For bilateral and multilateral partners, BNUB represents an institutional guarantee that their money is being well spent. I have also conveyed that message to the President himself.

Consequently, from my point of view, a continued presence of BNUB on the ground is essential. I am aware that the Government of Burundi would like its mandate to be extended for another year before it is transformed into a country team. That decision of course has to be taken by the Security Council. For my part, I also strongly argue — and all Steering Group members have delivered this message to me — for a sustained BNUB presence, ideally until 2015.

We all know that Burundi is not one of the primary concerns of the Security Council, but it is often the "silent" countries that represent the true success stories. Let us not jeopardize this opportunity by prematurely withdrawing.

If the Government should sense a certain unease about a prolonged political presence of BNUB and have the feeling that being on the Security Council's agenda may create the impression that Burundi is not a "normal" country, let me offer a response. The only "abnormality" regarding Burundi — and on this I agree completely with Special Representative of the Secretary-General — is the impressive progress it has achieved in such a short time. Being on the Council's agenda does not give the country a negative image; to the contrary, it is another aspect of its success story.

Let me conclude with an urgent appeal to all donors present here today. Due to its difficult economic and financial environment, Burundi risks encountering considerable problems in meeting even the most basic budgetary expenses. That concern has been brought to my attention not only by the Government, but also by international partners. I therefore urge all donors to seriously consider increasing their development assistance in the form of budgetary support.

I remain at the Council's disposal for any questions.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Burundi.

Mr. Shingiro (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to join those who spoke before me in congratulating you, Mr. President, on behalf of my delegation, for your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January 2013. Allow me to also extend to the members of the Council, on behalf of the Government of Burundi and on my own behalf, the warmest greetings of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Burundi, Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza.

The peace dividend that the people of Burundi are now enjoying is the outcome of the joint efforts of its people and the international community, in particular the United Nations. The gradual withdrawal of the forces of the United Nations Operation in Burundi was the result of a compromise between the United Nations and Burundi because the political, social and security situation was increasingly improving. Consequently, it was necessary to transform that mission into the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi, with a mandate to consolidate peace and strengthen national capacity.

During those events, in 2007 the Government of Burundi, with the support of the United Nations, drafted a strategic peacebuilding framework, which

underscored four priorities: governance, justice and human rights, security sector reform, and, finally, land issues and community revival.

The financing of 18 quick-impact projects that were developed within the framework of implementing the strategic peacebuilding framework allowed the people of Burundi to overcome many challenges that were linked with the integration of former combatants, national capacity-building in terms of promoting human rights, combating poverty, and community revival, as well as the reintegration of thousands of returnees, most of whom were coming back from neighbouring countries.

The transformation of the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi to the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB), with a light footprint for an for an initial period of one year beginning on January 2011, was brought about, as representatives all know, by a political, social and security situation that was becoming increasingly manageable. Therefore, it was necessary to continue to consolidate peace and tackle the fight against poverty, which is the main enemy of the people of Burundi.

The Office's mission also included working with the Government "to develop a set of benchmarks for the future evolution of the United Nations Office in Burundi to a United Nations country team" and to report regularly to the Security Council on progress on that task. That work was completed, and the Secretary-General presented the Council with the report on 10 May 2012 (S/2012/310, annex).

We take this opportunity to report to the Council Burundi's significant progress on many fronts, and we will make more progress in the future. Burundi already serves as an example for several struggling countries around the world. Without outlining all the tangible results achieved in recent years, I would like to share some of them with the Council, issue by issue.

In the area of democratic processes, Burundi has made important progress in strengthening democracy and resolving political differences through inclusive dialogue. I will enumerate a few notable achievements in that sphere. First, in 2010, was the holding of fair, open, democratic elections in keeping with international electoral standards. Secondly, we drafted the law concerning opposition parties, which will allow all political players to participate in constructive, organized political dialogue. Thirdly, on a consensus basis and with the Parliament's approval, we appointed members of the National Independent Electoral Commission with a view to preparing in a timely way for the 2015 elections.

The whole of the Burundian population has benefited from those achievements. According to a poll conducted by Gallup World Path, the percentage of Burundians who have confidence in Burundi's electoral process rose from 66 per cent in 2009 to 83 per cent in 2011 — an increase of 17 per cent in less than two years.

In the sphere of security and stability, the Government of Burundi has continued to improve its security and defence forces and make them more professional, with a view to responding effectively to both national and international security problems while respecting norms and rights. We can point to a number of significant achievements in that area.

First, in the framework of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, the relevant services were able to collect and destroy more than 12,000 grenades, over 2,000 rifles and around 4,000 hand guns in 2009. The successful integration of former rebels into our defence and security corps, in strict accordance with the Arusha Peace Agreement, has greatly contributed to stabilizing the country by providing security and protection for all. Secondly, at the end of 2012 more than 60 per cent of weapons belonging to the Police nationale du Burundi were registered and marked. During the same period, 100 per cent of the weapons of the Forces de défense nationale were registered and marked. Those percentages are compared to 50 per cent and 40 per cent in 2011, respectively.

A third significant development was the drafting of the National Security Strategy. Fourthly, again according to Gallup World Path, the people's confidence in the Force national de défence has also increased, from 89 per cent in 2009 to 91 per cent in 2011. The Police nationale du Burundi have also enjoyed an increase in popular confidence, from 82 per cent in 2009 to 83 per cent in 2011.

In the area of strengthening good governance and national institutions, a number of institutions called for in Burundi's Constitution have been established. Among them are the Anti-corruption Brigade and the Anti-corruption Court, created in 2006, the National Communications Council, in 2007, the National Security Council, in 2008, and the Permanent Forum

of Political Parties, in 2010. In 2011 the National Independent Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman and the Burundi Revenue Authority were established. There are others as well.

In the fight against corruption, according to Transparency International's 2012 East African Bribery Index, Burundi has moved from last place in East Africa to second place on the list of countries least affected by corruption in the East African Community. The recent adoption of our National Strategy on Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption, together with the integration of the fight against corruption in our Constitution and criminal code, leaves no doubt that our anti-corruption initiative will continue. The call by the President of the Republic of Burundi for objective application of a zero-tolerance to anyone found guilty of financial malfeasance remains our watchword.

With regard to the rule of law, since the 2005 transition period Burundi's Government has unflaggingly focused its efforts on fostering the independence of the judicial sector. For example, the year 2011 was devoted to developing departmental policies for the Ministry of Justice for 2011-2015, an initiative confirming the Government's firm commitment to strengthening the independence of the judicial sector. The year 2011 also saw an increase in the percentage of the population voicing confidence in Burundi's justice system. According, again, to a Gallup World Path poll, it increased by around 10 per cent between 2009 and 2011.

As for respect for human rights, the Government of Burundi has continued to nurture a culture of protection and promotion. The National Independent Human Rights Commission continues to conduct investigations of cases on its docket. In the interest of greater contact with the public, the Commission has set up three regional offices in the country's interior. Along the same lines, the Government of Burundi is pleased to continue the ongoing dialogue with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, especially because a number of meetings were held with that Office on the vital question of human rights.

In the same vein, the Government of Burundi cannot leave unmentioned the violence routinely done to women and girls. To address it, a care centre for victims of sexual abuse — le Centre Humura — has been set up in the middle of the country, in Gitega. Other measures have also been taken, notably the creation of a criminal office that is always open so that serious cases can be judged while the facts are fresh.

As for regional integration, Burundi continues to focus much effort on being integrated into important regional entities. It takes part in all meetings of the East African Community and chaired its 2011 summit with striking success. To demonstrate its deep commitment to regional integration, Burundi included that sector among the eight pillars of its Vision 2025 and gave it a place of prominence in its second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. The economic benefits of this integration are many. Internal trade between Burundi and the EAC has grown by 15 per cent since we joined the Community, in 2007, and that trend is continuing.

In the area of socioeconomic development, I should point out that despite the considerable efforts of the Government of Burundi and its people to improve the country's socioeconomic situation and the quality of life of its citizens, poverty, the lack of land, food insecurity and high unemployment are still major challenges that Burundi will have to tackle in the years to come. In order to achieve that, budgetary support from our partners, beyond project financing, will continue to be more essential than ever.

Aware of the extreme poverty that Burundi is dealing with, the people of Burundi themselves, with the support of their development partners, have decided to formulate their strategic framework for growth and poverty reduction, which integrates some peacebuilding elements into its first pillar. This is the right moment, through you, Mr. President, to thank the international community and the development partners who put their efforts into ensuring that we received better-than-expected pledges at the Development Partners Conference on Burundi held on 29 and 30 October in Geneva. It was an undisputed success.

It is true that Burundi has made significant progress in several areas in recent years, but there are still challenges to be met that require the support of the international community in general, and of the United Nations in particular. Regarding the challenges that remain, Burundi, like the other countries in the subregion, cannot fully enjoy the peace it has regained or speak of peacebuilding when the security situation in the subregion as a whole is not good. The negative forces that are active in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo portend a troubling security situation and have led us to remain vigilant and to

adopt a policy of neither interference not indifference. The situation in the eastern Congo deserves greater attention from the Security Council, since it runs the risk of inflaming the entire region, thereby threatening international peace and security.

Aware of the part that the international community has played in restoring peace to our country, the Government of Burundi will continue to send troops to other countries in difficulties in order to help them regain and consolidate peace. That reflects our reciprocity for, and recognition of, what the international community has done for Burundi during the difficult periods in our own history.

I believe the Council will agree that no country in the world can ever get everything done at once. That is why the Government of Burundi appeals to the international community to recognize that our country has made significant progress in the areas I have mentioned. In order to accomplish that, my Government's hope is, in the best-case scenario, to achieve a new framework of cooperation with the United Nations through the progressive transformation of the United Nations Office in Burundi into a new United Nations country team in Burundi. The Government believes that a period of 12 months will be more than enough to achieve such a reconfiguration. The country team could continue to cooperate with the Government of Burundi in key areas, including democratic governance, combating corruption, security sector and justice reform and the promotion and protection of human rights.

The same applies to the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. While recognizing and paying tribute the efforts of Ambassador Paul Seger and his predecessors, Burundi would like to see a more flexible commitment in terms of the timetable, agreed on with the Commission, and taking into account the context of the strategic framework for growth and poverty reduction and its first pillar, as well as of the evolving situation in our country.

Concerning the current report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/36), the Government of Burundi takes note of it and reiterates its intention to cooperate fully with the United Nations in order to meet its remaining challenges within a framework of good governance, the rule of law and community restoration. We would like to take this opportunity to offer our sincere thanks through you, Mr. President, to the Secretary-General for producing a balanced report in which he explicitly acknowledges that the human rights situation in Burundi improved significantly in 2012 by comparison with the previous two years. The Government of Burundi, for its part, is committed to maintaining that trend.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.